

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MORG, CFED, BE

SUBJECT:TAX DIFFICULTIES WITH BELGIAN TAX RELIEF

REFS: (A) BRUSSELS 6362

(B) BRUSSELS 6745

(C) BRUSSELS 7349

1. PROGRESS MADE IN OBTAINING TAX RELIEF DESCRIBED IN REF A IS APPRECIATED.

2. WE NOTE THAT REF A DOES NOT MENTION THE 16 APARTMENTS FOR ENLISTED BACHELOR PERSONNEL IN BRUSSELS AND ASSUME THAT EMBASSY CONTEMPLATES NO TAX RELIEF ACTION WITH RESPECT TO THESE QUARTERS AT THIS TIME. WE QUESTION FEASIBILITY OF PIECEMEAL APPROACH ON ISSUE OF US ENTITLEMENT TO TAX EXEMPTION SINCE OVERALL US OBJECTIVE IS BELGIAN COMPLIANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF 1952 TAX RELIEF AGREEMENT AND FINALITY OF OFFICIAL USE/COMMON DEFENSE DETERMINATIONS. WE RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT IT BE MADE CLEAR TO THE BELGIANS AT THE TIME THAT THE LIST OF QUARTERS IS DELIVERED TO THEM AND, AS WELL, DURING THE NEXT NEGOTIATION SESSION THAT US EFFORTS TO OBTAIN TAX RELIEF WITH RESPECT TO POSITION QUARTERS IS ONLY A PART OF AN OVERALL US EFFORT

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TO OBTAIN THE TAX BENEFITS TO WHICH THE US IS ENTITLED

UNDER THE 1952 TAX RELIEF AGREEMENT.

3. WE HAVE SOME CONCERN THAT PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON POSITION QUARTERS TO BELGIANS MAY BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE IN THAT THEY MAY CONSIDER SUCH ACTION AS INDICATIVE OF THEIR AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE DEFINITELY THE ELIGIBILITY OF SUCH QUARTERS FOR TAX EXEMPTION. IN THIS RESPECT WE URGE RESISTANCE TO ANY BELGIAN EFFORTS TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF POSITION QUARTERS THAT ARE ENTITLED TO TAX EXEMPT STATUS.

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